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Testimony for Appropriations Committee Public Hearing April 2, 2015

Written Testimony for SB 816-An Act Establishing a Minimum Level of Funding Under the Education Cost Sharing Formula

The Connecticut Association of School Business Officials (CASBO) is a non-profit professional association that represents school business officials (SBOs) throughout the state of Connecticut. SBOs work closely with school boards, administrators, staff, public officials and communities; and are responsible for most aspects of school business and operations. This includes, but not limited to, developing and monitoring school district budgets. It is within this contest that we offer the following comments with respect to SB 816.

The original intent of ECS was to provide fair and equitable funding for public schools across the state. Due to caps, stop loss provisions, magnet school calculations and other changes, the ECS formula has become outdated. This formula change, coupled with underfunding of the State's ECS commitment, has resulted in not only inequitable distribution of ECS funds but underfunding of ECS in most communities. This has resulted in many towns carrying more and more of the burden of educating our public school children.

CASBO urges the legislature to fix the ECS by developing and fully funding a formula that will provide an adequate and equitable education for all children. Although SB 816 does not completely address this inequity, CASBO strongly supports providing a minimum level of education of funding for all public schools in Connecticut.

CASBO appreciates the opportunity to provide input to the Appropriations Committee on this important matter.